

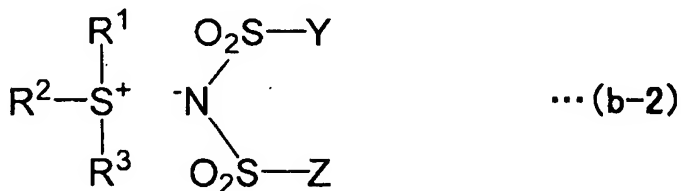
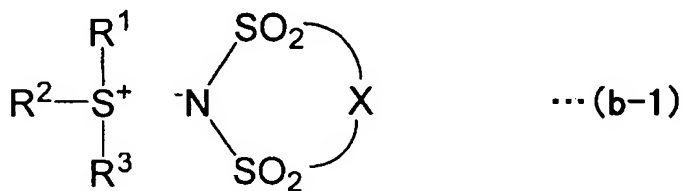
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A resist composition[[,]] comprising a resin component (A) that undergoes a change in alkali solubility ~~under action~~ in the presence of acid, and an acid generator component (B) that generates acid on exposure, wherein

said resin component (A) ~~is a resin with~~ has a weight average molecular weight of no more than 8,000 ~~which~~ and comprises structural units (a) derived from a (meth)acrylate ester[[,]]; and

said component (B) comprises at least one sulfonium compound represented by a general formula (b-1) or a general formula (b-2) shown below:

[Formula 1]



[wherein, X represents an alkylene group of 2 to 6 carbon atoms in which at least one hydrogen atom has been substituted with a fluorine atom; Y and Z each represent, independently, an alkyl group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms in which at least one hydrogen atom has been substituted with a fluorine atom; R<sup>1</sup> to R<sup>3</sup> each represent, independently, an aryl group or an alkyl group, and at least one of R<sup>1</sup> to R<sup>3</sup> represents an aryl group].

2. (Currently amended) A resist composition according to claim 1, wherein said component (B) ~~also~~ further comprises an onium salt-based acid generator ~~containing~~ comprising a straight-chain fluorinated alkylsulfonate ~~ion~~ anion of 1 to 7 carbon atoms ~~as an anion~~.

3. (Currently amended) A resist composition according to claim 1, wherein said structural units (a) ~~have~~ comprise structural units (a1) derived from a (meth)acrylate ester ~~containing~~ comprising an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group.

4. (Currently amended) A resist composition according to claim 3, wherein said structural units (a) ~~also have~~ further comprise structural units (a2) derived from a (meth)acrylate ester ~~containing~~ comprising a lactone-containing monocyclic or polycyclic group.

5. (Currently amended) A resist composition according to claim 3, wherein said structural units (a) ~~also have~~ further comprise structural units (a3) derived from a (meth)acrylate ester ~~containing~~ comprising a polar group-containing aliphatic hydrocarbon group.

6. (Original) A resist composition according to claim 1, further comprising a nitrogen-containing organic compound.

7. (Currently amended) A method for forming a resist pattern, comprising the steps of forming a resist film on a substrate using a resist composition according to claim 1[[,]]; conducting selective exposure treatment of said resist film[[,]]; and ~~then conducting~~ alkali developing said resist film to form said resist pattern.

8. (Original) A resist pattern formed using a method according to claim 7.